

THE SOCIALIST REVIEW

FARMER-LABOR PARTY

THE FORUM OF AMERICAN RADICALS

PROFITS AND PROFITEERS

A. F. of L. CONVENTION
GERMAN ELECTIONS

OUR COURTS AT WORK
THE COMMUNISTS

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The Farmer-Labor Party

ON July 13, 1920, in the city of Chicago, a new "third party," called the Farmer-Labor, appeared on the political stage, and two days later nominated a Utah lawyer and a Cleveland labor editor as its standard bearers. It hopes to draw as its supporters "the amalgamated groups of forward-looking men and women who perform useful work with hand and brain."

We are reserving for another issue an analysis of the conflict between the "conservative intellectual leaders" of the Committee of Forty-Eight and the "radicals" of the Labor Party, which resulted in a victory of the latter and the withdrawal of Senator La Follette from the presidential lists.

Public Ownership and Democratic Control

To students of socialism, the third and fourth planks of the platform adopted, advocating for the workers "increasing share in the responsibilities and management of industry" and a degree of public ownership, are of the greatest importance. These sections read as follows:

"Democratic Control of Industry—The right of labor to an increasing share in the responsibilities and management of industry, application of this principle to be developed in accordance with the experience of actual operation.

"Public Ownership and Operation—Immediate repeal of the Esch-Cummins law, public ownership and operation, with democratic control, of all public utilities and natural resources, including stock yards, large abattoirs, grain elevators, water powers, and cold storage, and terminal warehouses, government ownership and democratic operation of the railroads, mines, and such natural resources as are in whole or in part bases of control, by special interests, of staple industries and monopolies, such as lands containing coal, iron, copper, oil, large water powers, and

commercial lines, and establishment of a public policy that no land (including natural resources) and no patents shall be held out of use for speculation or to aid monopoly; establishment of national and State owned banks where the money of the government must and that of individuals may be deposited, granting of credit to individuals and groups according to regulations laid down by Congress which will safeguard deposits.

"We denounce the attempt to scuttle our great government-owned merchant marine and favor bringing the ocean-going commerce to our inland ports.

"This party, financed by the rank and file and not by big business, sets about the task of fundamental reconstruction of democracy in the United States, to restore all power to the people, and to set up a governmental structure that will prevent seizure, henceforth, of that power by a few unscrupulous men. . . . This involves industrial freedom, for political democracy is only an empty phrase without industrial democracy."

The Nine Planks

The first plank demands the restoration of civil liberties, amnesty for political prisoners, "protection of the right of all workers to strike," limitation of the power of the courts, universal suffrage, "regardless of sex, race, color or creed," and the initiative, referendum, and recall.

Plank two deals with foreign relations. It urges the United States to withdraw "from further participation (under the Treaty of Versailles) in the reduction of conquered peoples to economic or political subjection to the small groups of men who manipulate the bulk of the world's wealth." It demands that the country refuse "to go to war with Mexico at the behest of Wall Street," that it recognize "the elected government of the republic of Ireland and of the government established by the Russian people"; that it deny assistance, "financial, military, or otherwise for foreign armies invading these countries," and that it place "an embargo on the shipment of arms and ammunition to be used against the Russian or Irish people." It favors the "instant lifting of the blockade against Russia, withdrawal by this country from imperialistic enterprises," such as our "dictatorships" over the Philippines, Hawaii, Haiti, the Dominican republic

lic, Porto Rico, Cuba, Samoa, and Guam, and opposes military or industrial conscription.

The third and fourth provisions, for workers' control and public ownership, were quoted above.

The fifth plank is devoted to the agricultural situation. The party urges under this heading "laws leading to a reduction of the evils of tenancy, establishment of public markets, extension of the federal farm loan system, better credit and transportation facilities for farmers, a government information service, coöperative organizations, and studies in costs of production, etc."

Plank six, dealing with government finance, favors "steeply graduated income taxes." To reduce the cost of living, plank seven urges stabilization of the currency, "federal control of the meat packing industry, extension and perfection of the parcels post, and the enforcement of existing laws against profiteers."

"Justice to the soldiers," a subsidy which will make their "war-pay not less than civilian earnings" is demanded in plank eight.

The last general plank is the "Bill of Rights for Labor." The concrete demands under this heading include: unqualified right of collective bargaining, freedom from compulsory arbitration, a maximum standard eight-hour day and forty-four-hour week, old-age and unemployment payments and workmen's compensation against accident and disease, the establishment of large government works during periods of unemployment, care for war cripples, abolition of child labor under sixteen years of age, protection of women in industry and equal pay for equal work, prevention of exploitation of immigrants, enforcement of the Seamen's act, and exclusion of products of convict labor from interstate commerce.

Nominees

Following the adoption of the program, Parley Parker Christensen, a Salt Lake City attorney, and member of the Committee of Forty-Eight, and Max Hayes, editor of the *Cleveland Citizen* and the socialist candidate for president of the American Federation of Labor against Gompers a decade ago, were nominated for president and vice-president, respectively.

Late in the convention a number of the members of the Committee of Forty-Eight withdrew, claiming that the eastern liberals, small merchants, and professional men whom they had hoped to reach would be driven away from a "class name." They returned

to their own convention. The Nonpartisan League, in view of numerous statements that it had officially endorsed the Farmer-Labor Party, declared, during the week, through Oliver S. Morris, head of the League's publications, that

"the several Leaguers at the convention had no authority to bind the League in any way. Stories that the League might amalgamate with the Committee of 48 or other third party movements are also misleading, as the League has never and never will merge, amalgamate, or affiliate with any organization or party."

The League may, however, endorse candidates of this party.

At about the same time Mr. Gompers and other leaders of the A. F. of L. published a signed statement declaring that "the planks written into the Democratic platform more nearly approximate the desired declarations of human rights than do the planks of the Republican platform." This statement was interpreted by many to mean that these leaders would throw their influence in the campaign in behalf of the Democratic ticket.

In view of this situation, many students of politics claim that, in this campaign, no large group will be successfully appealed to by the Farmer-Labor Party ticket which the Socialist Party could not reach just as effectively. It is doubtful, they assert, whether the ticket will receive the endorsement of the Nonpartisan League. The leading officials of the A. F. of L. will not give it the federation's support. Many of the liberals in the Committee of Forty-Eight have withdrawn. The Single Taxers have nominated a ticket of their own. Many radicals constituting the rank and file of organized labor who go as far in their economic thinking as does the Labor Party platform, particularly among the railway workers, will greatly prefer the imprisoned labor leader, Eugene V. Debs, to the Utah attorney.

The supporters of the movement, on the other hand, claim that they have an entrée to a big labor and farmer element which the Socialist Party cannot stir to action. The future alone will decide which contention comes nearer the truth.

The Meaning of the German Elections

THE German elections are over, and Germany's socialist prime minister and semi-socialist cabinet have made way for bourgeois successors. The socialists take no part in the new government.

Yet the elections were not a defeat for the socialists, and a period in the Opposition may well serve to bring some of the too moderate socialists back to their socialist senses. The socialist vote in June, 1920, was 42% of the total vote as compared with 45.6% in January, 1919, only a few frightened bourgeois who voted socialist in the hectic days of the revolution having deserted the party standard.

But there was a great swing to the left within the socialist ranks. The Independent Socialist vote jumped from 2,317,000 to 4,810,000, while the moderate "Majority" Social Democratic vote dropped from 11,607,000 to 5,331,000; and the Communists, who stand to the left of the Independents, and who did not participate in the elections of 1919, this year cast 438,000. (The vote this year was very heavy, but the total vote is smaller than in 1919, because districts which, according to the peace treaty, are subject to plebiscite, are not permitted to vote in German elections until their final status is determined. Many of these districts were heavily Social Democratic in 1919, and the representatives then elected sit in the new Reichstag until new elections can be held.) Impatience with the compromising and hesitating policy of the Social Democrats in the coalition, disgust at the free hand given to the reactionary army leaders, a weariness of social reform that did not reform, and a readiness for radical revolutionary measures, and the normal discontent with the party in power—all these factors shared in causing the swing to the Independents. It was more marked in the big industrial cities than in the small towns and rural districts. Berlin, Essen, Leipzig, all gave heavy Independent majorities.

The striking revelation of the elections was the sharp crystallization of class lines. The extremes gained in the election, and the middle-of-the-road parties lost. The Democratic Party—the bourgeois liberals—lost half its strength to the capitalist "German People's Party." The old center coalition became impossible. The new government is a minority government, a coalition of the Democratic, Catholic, and People's Party forces, enabled to remain in power only because the Majority Social Democrats for the present maintain a policy of benevolent neutrality—a policy of treason to the working class which can hardly last.

The results, summarized, were as follows:

	Members in Parliament		Per cent. Total vote	
	1920	1919	1920	1919
Communists	2	...	1.7	...
Independent Socialists..	80	22	18.7	7.6
Social Democrats.....	110	163	21.6	38.0
Democrats	44	74	8.4	18.3
Centrum (Catholic)....	88	89	18.6	19.0
People's Party.....	61	22	13.5	5.0
Nationalists	65	42	14.2	9.9
Scattered	9	7	3.3	2.0

The Communists are sadly split. The old Spartakusbund determined a few weeks before the elections to abandon its anti-parliamentary aloofness and enter the electoral campaign, but its efforts had small success. The simon-pure anti-parliamentarians, ejected from this party, formed a new Communist Labor Party. At one time affiliated with this group were the "National Bolsheviks," led by Lauffenberg, of Hamburg, who were ready to join hands with Kapp to get rid of the bourgeois-democratic regime, in the hope that a militarist-Bolshevist alliance and world revolution might follow. The real strength of German communism is now in the left wing of the Independent Party; the party is on record in favor of the soviet system, dictatorship of the proletariat, and the Third Internationale. Feeling has run high between it and the Majority Social Democrats, but community in opposition may lead to the discovery of new points of sympathy.

L. S. G.

The A. F. of L. Convention

FOR a true estimate of the advance of the American Federation of Labor along industrial and political lines as expressed at its 1920 convention at Montreal, its actions must be taken relatively. The federation is not as yet competing with the Soviets for the revolutionary crown. It is still reactionary from the standpoint of the extreme left wing, but, nevertheless, it is drifting into the socialist maelstrom in which all labor movements of the world, with few exceptions, have already been engulfed.

Events took place at Montreal that showed very clearly how much out of hand the federation is getting. Gompers and a few of his lieutenants fought valiantly but hopelessly against the resolution sponsored by the railroad crafts for public ownership and democratic control of the railroads. He pointed out that accepting such a proposal meant also approval in time of socialization of the banks, the steel mills, the mines, and all basic industry. His counsel was spurned and the new policy of the federation was riveted on the record books by a roll call vote of 29,159 to 8,349.

The tide ran so high against Gompers after this smashing victory that the executive council was in a panic, for if the insurgents held their alliance, it meant a new leadership. In fact Gompers was morally bound to resign after so decisive a repudiation and he intimated that he would. For 12 frantic hours the old guard worked and finally succeeded in breaking up the alignment.

They separated the miners from the railroad men the night before the elections, and, despite the defection of the biggest single union in the federation, it was possible for the rebellious element to poll 18,195 votes against a machine candidate. A switching of 900 votes meant a clear majority, and next year, even without the miners, the newly found power of the railroad men will probably force the break among the old leaders.

Independent thinking was more in evi-

dence at this convention than at any previous gathering of the federation and this goes back for forty years. The amnesty resolution, weak and belated as it was, went over without a dissenting voice. At the Atlantic City convention a similar proposal was howled down and the radicals who backed it were excoriated. Recognition of the Irish republic was insisted upon and still the Irish nationalists were not satisfied. Gompers' insistence that hospitality to the Dominion government required moderation on this matter cost him many friendships.

Russia received more support than the most sanguine expected. A substitute resolution to lift the blockade, however, was declared defeated without a roll call, although 159 hands were raised in its favor. At Atlantic City only a score could thus be counted.

When the League of Nations was assailed, Gompers lifted a cry of despair, saying:

"For the life of me, I cannot understand this disposition to reverse our almost unanimous position of last year."

Only an abrupt closing of debate and refusal to heed the request for a roll call saved the day for the treaty of peace.

Gompers lost on the beer and light wine issue in his own executive council, although the year before he was able to stage a pilgrimage to Washington to obtain a modification of the prohibition amendment. As a result the federation did not fight for "booze" at the Republican convention this year.

The significance of the Montreal convention lies in the fact that the old individualist theory of Gompers as to the relation of the trade union and the state has broken down. The old guard was crushingly defeated on its essential difference with the labor movements of other countries, its opposition to socialization. (This change of policy came about through the insistent demand of the rank and file of the railroad workers, who have been educated by years of propaganda and their recent reverses under private operation to accept a collectivist ideal.)

The other important development is that the balance of power has shifted in the federation. Gompers, by his uncanny political shrewdness, has been held in power for a lifetime by a pyramid of votes at each convention, of which the building trades were the key-stone. The railroad workers have been organized in the last five years with the result that, with proper leadership, they can now dominate the federation. They are no longer marching as distinct crafts, but as one large industrial unit; and this force conquered Gompers, when years of incessant personal and unorganized attacks by radicals failed.

The Gompers' hope of keeping the trade union movement of America away from socialist ideas has been shattered. His personal leadership, on account of his great age and long service, is not assailed. But although he is still at the wheel, the ship no longer responds to the helmsman. Like his friend, Woodrow Wilson, Sam Gompers is through.

J. C. L.

Our Courts at Work

THREE outstanding decisions affecting political and economic movements of the workers have recently been handed down by our courts. Two of these—Judge Anderson's famous decision in the communist deportation cases and that of the United States Supreme Court upholding state ownership of industries in North Dakota—have been hailed as triumphs for political and industrial democracy. The third, that of the lower court in New York state granting a permanent injunction and damages against the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, has given rise to much concern in the ranks of labor.

Judge Anderson Releases the Communists

The most recent and the most discussed of these decisions is that of Federal Judge George W. Anderson of Boston in late June, releasing twenty-five communists on bail pending an appeal by the Department of Labor. The significant features of this

35,000 word ruling are Judge Anderson's declaration that there is nothing illegal in the manifesto of the Communist Party, and his bitter denunciation of the methods employed by the Department of Justice.

The July issue of *The Socialist Review* reported at length the raids of the Department of Justice against the "reds." In the Boston raid several hundred communists and alleged communists were arrested. Twenty-five of these petitioned the federal court for writs of habeas corpus. The decision of Judge Anderson came in response to that petition. Of main interest is his interpretation of the Communist Party program and his discussion of "direct action," in part as follows:

"The conclusion is irresistible that the only force worth discussion believed in or advocated by this party, is the general strike. Otherwise its methods are those of ordinary political or social propaganda. . . . The salient words in the case are 'force and violence.' If force is not absolutely synonymous with violence, it is clear that it does not mean force of the religious, moral, or political kind. The only remaining question is as to whether it may mean economic force exercised through the medium of the general strike. Did Congress intend, by the use of the word 'force,' to condemn the general strike when advocated by aliens? . . . It would be strange to find Congress dealing with the general strike in this inadequate and disguised fashion. . . . For about a century the tendency of the law-making bodies has been to facilitate and legalize—not to outlaw—strikes as forces in industrial conflict. The trend of American courts has been to limit the power of the courts to interfere with strikers by injunctions."

Judge Anderson admits that the general strike is "a tremendous—almost a terrifying force." It is not necessarily of a violent nature, "although violence may follow as an incident to any strike, general or special." There are some stock phrases in the communist program, he admits, concerning "the necessity of revolution," but

"both religious and political crusaders commonly used the nomenclature of warfare. Here in the Occident, freedom and a saving sense of humor and proportion have until recently saved us from being frightened by crusaders' rhetoric. In an Oriental missionary field 'Onward Christian Soldiers' is said to be regarded as an alien, seditious

war song, the use of which the missionaries have had to abandon. Our hymn-books may shortly attract the eye and excite the suspicions of the official censor. . . . Practically all the propositions set forth in the present turgid rhetorical program are found in the Manifesto of 1847 of Marx and Engels."

The communists, declares Judge Anderson, met openly in halls,

"not secretly, not in armories, not in laboratories, where explosives might be compounded. . . . No weapons of the cutting or exploding kind with which modern wars, insurrections, and revolutions are carried on, were found on their premises. . . . These aliens . . . were, while under arrest, found capable of organizing among themselves an effective and democratic form of local government."

The court's denunciation of the methods employed by the Department of Justice and, to a lesser extent by the Department of Labor, while restrained, is nevertheless caustic.

"A mob is a mob, whether made up of government officials acting under instructions from the Department of Justice, or of criminals, loafers, and the vicious classes. . . .

"I cannot adopt the contention that government spies are more trustworthy or less disposed to make trouble in order to profit therefrom than are spies in private industry. Spies are necessarily drawn from the unwholesome and untrustworthy classes. A right-minded man refuses such a job. The spy system destroys trust and confidence and propagates hatred. . . .

"Now that it appears that government spies constituted in December, 1919, an active and efficient part of the Communist Party, it may well be that the Secretary of Labor will find it desirable, through his own forces, to institute some investigations of the nature and extent of the possible activity and influences of these spies in giving form and color to the documents on which the Secretary of Labor based his rulings."

This decision, comments *The New Republic*, "will stand out as one of the permanent landmarks in the history of human freedom." The facts presented therein, this journal concludes, should lead to Attorney General Palmer's impeachment.

Immediately following the decision to release the twenty-five, the Department of Labor decided to appeal the case.

The Supreme Court Upholds Nonpartisan League

"A mortal blow was dealt the special privilege forces and their hireling politicians in North Dakota and elsewhere who are seeking to destroy the farmers' movement, when the United States Supreme Court, by a unanimous decision, June 1, upheld the constitutionality of the North Dakota industrial program. . . .

"The . . . decision means that the Bank of North Dakota, the state-owned mill at Drake, and the Home Building association can go on with their work, that construction work can be rushed on the great terminal elevator and mill at Grand Forks, and that similar industries can be started in every other state in the union where the people declare for them."

The above is the Nonpartisan League's interpretation of the decision of the Supreme Court in the case of Green et al. (taxpayers) against Governor Frazier. As the *Nonpartisan Leader* points out, the effect of the decision will not be confined to North Dakota—it means that every state in the union is practically free to develop a "coöperative commonwealth" of its own, as far as the U. S. constitution is concerned, providing such a program obtains the sanction of the people, the courts, and the constitution of that state.

The suit giving rise to the Supreme Court decision was begun by a number of taxpayers of North Dakota, who insisted that they were being taxed for the purpose of maintaining state industries of a private nature, and that such taxation was depriving them of property "without due process of law" in violation of the fourteenth amendment to the U. S. constitution. The Supreme Court of North Dakota and Judge Amidon of the Federal Court had decided in favor of the League's activities.

Mr. Justice Day of the U. S. Supreme Court, in rendering his decision, took the position that "the people, the legislature, and the highest court of the state have declared the purpose for which these several acts were passed were of a public nature and within the taxing power of the state," and that "the local authority, legislative and judicial, had especial means of securing information to enable them to form a judgment."

"Under the peculiar conditions existing in North Dakota . . . if the state sees fit to enter upon such enterprises as are here involved, with the sanction of its constitution, its legislature, and its people, we are not prepared to say that it is within the authority of this court, in enforcing the observance of the fourteenth amendment, to set aside such action by judicial decision."

Several years ago the Supreme Court had decided (in *Jones vs. City of Portland*) that the cities and towns of Maine could establish and maintain wood, coal, and fuel yards for the purpose of selling these necessities to the people. This was the only decision rendered by the highest court in the land in regard to the constitutionality of state and municipal industries prior to the North Dakota case. The recent ruling, involving industries of such magnitude, is thus of extraordinary importance.

Attack on Amalgamated's Treasury

While the cause of state ownership of industry and that of free speech were distinctly advanced by the two federal court decisions in the cases involving the Nonpartisan League and the Communist Party, that of organized labor met with a distinct setback in Judge Rodenbeck's ruling of June 19 in the *Amalgamated Clothing Workers'* case.

The suit for a permanent injunction and for \$100,000 damages on the part of Michaels, Stern and Company of Rochester against the *Amalgamated* was described in the June number of *The Socialist Review*.

Judge A. J. Rodenbeck of the New York Supreme Court (a lower court in the state), barred from the trial the great mass of testimony which aimed to show the benefits rendered by the *Amalgamated*. In his decision the judge conceded the legality of the union's object—the recognition of the union. He maintained, however, that the means used during the strike were illegal.

"While picketing may be legal, if it is conducted with the design and has the effect of intimidating those who may desire to remain at work or seek employment, it infringes upon human freedom and liberty of action."

The judge insisted that the *Amalgamated* used picket lines several hundred strong for

the purpose of awing and intimidating the workers; that the strikebreakers were called names; that violence was sometimes used; that such means were contemplated when the strike was called, and that the national organization was cognizant of what was going on. To be sure there was no express intention to this effect, but "the law will not be defeated by the failure to express such intentions in writing." A permanent injunction and "damages to be hereafter determined" were thus granted. An appeal to the appellate division was immediately taken.

If the decision stands, suits to regain losses suffered during strikes may become the chief sport of employers in New York state. The only thing needful to be shown is that the workers have indulged during a strike in some forms of violence or intimidation. Since the word intimidation involves moral coercion, as well as threats of physical violence, this is not difficult to prove to the satisfaction of many judges. Under these conditions, it would not take long to deplete the treasuries of labor unions. Thus this legal battle of the *Amalgamated*—among the most advanced of the forces of labor—is the battle of the entire working class. It was the *Taff Vale* decision in England in 1902, with its threat against the treasuries of organized labor, which furnished the first impetus to independent political action on a large scale. Will Judge Rodenbeck's decision have a similar effect?

H. W. L.

Labor Movies

A most important field of publicity hardly touched as yet by organized labor is opened up by the Labor Film Service, with Joseph D. Cannon as its Field Organizer. Intending to provide films that will display more truthfully the life of labor in the workshop, field and slum tenement, this venture should prove of great value to the workers if the aim of "an advisory council of labor and liberal leaders" is strictly adhered to, and if large labor organizations are given democratic control of its policy and management. W. H. C.

The United Communist Party

UNHERALDED by the Associated Press, unrecorded even by Judge Anderson, another political party was mysteriously born during the last of May or the first of June, "somewhere between the Atlantic and the Pacific, between the Gulf and the Great Lakes." The name of the organization is the United Communist Party, so called because it constitutes a merger between the Communist Labor Party and a section of the Communist Party not dominated by the Russian Federations. These federations, the main strength of the Communist Party, still maintain their separate organization.

The communist groups first came into being in America in September, 1919, with the whole world looking on. Their members were hunted down, arrested, assaulted, imprisoned, deported. The efforts of A. Mitchell Palmer, "the new Navarre," as he was described at the Democratic Convention, were successful. Communist propaganda was driven underground, and, underground, became more extreme. The sixty delegates who met in secret session somewhere in the Middle West, had taken a lesson from the page of experience. They neither invited the press, nor did they notify Mr. Palmer's agents of their gathering place. They discussed in secret for seven days, selected secret committees, and secret headquarters, and laid plans for self-defense and concealment in a manner that recalls the days of Czarist Russia.

The official account of the convention, given in *The Communist*, published at some unknown city, under date of June 12, 1920, thus explains the reason for secrecy and the purpose of the new party:

"The two organizations which are combined in the United Communist Party came into existence at a time when it was thought that they might function openly. Since that time the ruling class in this country has given ample evidence through raids, arrests, deportations, and imprisonments that no organization which is so fundamentally a challenge to the whole capitalist order as a communist party must be, can escape the full weight

of the power of persecution which the capitalists have at their command.

"The United Communist Party makes no pretense of legality. It has not attempted to express the fundamental communist principles in a way to make them pass the censorship of its bitter enemy. The program of the United Party is, what it should be, a bold challenge to the whole capitalist system and a declaration of revolutionary purpose, without reservation or compromise."

Met together in this spirit, the delegates considered the convention, "despite police persecution and constant surveillance of the active members of the two organizations . . . without discovery," a distinct achievement.

In these seven days, if we can believe the report, the delegates—half foreigners, half Americans—representing the two former enemies, the C. P. and the C. L. P., had many bitter controversies which promised at times to make united action impossible. A program, however, was finally whipped into shape. This program consists of three sections. Section I, on "The Breakdown of Capitalism," follows closely that of the Communist Party formed in September. A large part of Section II on "The Class Struggle" is but a restatement of the former program.

Tactics

With the older Communist Party the United Communists condemn the capitalist state, advocate "the dictatorship of the proletariat" during the transitional period and declare their purpose to participate in election campaigns and parliamentary action only for the purpose of revolutionary propaganda, to limit their nominations to legislative bodies, to "make use at appropriate times of the policy of boycotting the elections," and to propagandize industrial unionism as "a factor in the action of the conquest of power" and "a basis for industrial administration of the coöperative commonwealth."

It is in its paragraphs on "mass action" under this section that the party takes a more openly extreme position than did its predecessor, maintaining that, at an advanced stage of the class struggle, the capitalists, realizing the futility of other means, will

"resort to widespread use of the armed power of the state," and function "openly as a military dictatorship," that "the working class must then answer force with force," and that the class struggle "develops into open conflict, civil war."

It maintains that it is thus the function of the United Communist Party to familiarize the working class "with the inevitability of armed force in the proletarian revolution," so that the workers may be prepared when the time comes.

And in a previous paragraph, it remarks, in partial defense of this position:

"The expulsion of the socialist assemblymen at Albany, the expulsion of the socialist councilmen in Cleveland during the war, indicate how summarily the capitalists get rid of elected officials who even in the least degree challenge the capitalist dictatorship."

The I. W. W.

Under this section, also, the party differentiates itself from the I. W. W., rejecting the conception "that industrial unionism is of itself the means through which industry can be transferred from the capitalists to the workers. . . . The proletarian revolution," it maintains, "cannot be achieved by direct seizure of industry by the workers without the workers' first having conquered the power of the state and established themselves as a government." It recognizes the I. W. W., however, as "a revolt against the

existing trade unionism," offering "more efficient methods of struggle."

The policy adopted by the Socialist party of boring within the A. F. of L. it characterizes as "vicious." "A communist who belongs to the A. F. of L.," it asserts, "should seize every opportunity to voice his hostility to this organization, not to reform it but to destroy it." The I. W. W. will be interested to note that some of the delegates regarded it as "essentially no better than the A. F. of L.," citing the reactionary character of the I. W. W. in eastern cities.

Communist Ideal

Their present job, as the communists see it, is that of education, and of organizing the workers into shop councils. The final section of the program is of a more constructive nature. It advocates the socialization of the principal industries as opposed to mere government ownership—falsely accusing the socialists of favoring the latter.

"The task of the Proletarian Dictatorship in the economic field can only be fulfilled to the extent that the proletariat is enabled to create centralized organs of management and to institute workers' control. To this end it must make use of its mass organizations which are in closest relation to the process of production. . . .

"As in the field of production, so also in the field of distribution all qualified technicians and specialists are to be made use of, provided their political resistance is broken and they are still capable of adapting themselves, not to the service of capital, but to the new system of production. Far from oppressing them the proletariat will make it possible for the first time for them to develop intensive creative work. The Proletarian Dictatorship, with their coöperation, will relieve the separation of physical and mental work which capitalism has developed and thus will Science and Labor be unified."

The manifesto also praises "the council system" as opposed to "bourgeois democracy."

"The right and obligation to labor—service toward the common enjoyment of all—this shall be the basis of the citizenship under the communist regime.

"Education of the masses toward better social service and toward higher appreciation of the enjoyment of life is the foremost item in the

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communist transformation. . . . Art, music, the stage . . . become the institutions of the working class. . . . The better organization of the industrial and social system can in a single generation . . . achieve more toward the eradication of disease, crime, depravity, and superstition than has been accomplished in all the prior centuries together."

Protective Measures

The record of the party convention gives the names of the alleged officers—"Brown and Caxton" as international secretaries, "Damon, Scott, Reinhart," etc., five from the Communist and five from the Communist Labor Parties, as members of the executive committee—names unknown to close students of communist activities. In commenting on this strange array of new names, the record states:

"One who holds in his hand the scroll upon which is inscribed the record of this mysterious gathering is amazed, for one thing, at the roll of delegates: Communist Party and Communist Labor Party—but all these strange names? Not one of the 1919 communists present? Search the roll again—not one familiar name. Remarkable achievement of the Lusk-Palmer inquisition—not one of the 1919 Communists in the list!"

Adopting as the party has this method of camouflage, it has inevitably made it difficult for an outsider to gain admission to membership. Its constitution reads:

"Applications must be accepted with due care and only on recommendation of two persons who have been members for at least three months, except in newly organized groups in new territory. Every applicant shall be on probation for two months with a voice but no vote. . . . Applicants can be accepted only by unanimous vote of the group to which application is made."

After the experience with the Russian Federations, the delegates were of the opinion that the party should have nothing to do with "autonomous federations of language groups," as these interfered with "centralized organization capable of united action." They urged that centralization was necessary, as "an underground party must have the possibility of instant decision and action by a small committee; it must act as a single machine, else it can never strike a decisive blow."

Preparing for legal defense if prosecuted

by the authorities, the convention passed the following resolution:

"The United Communist Party favors every use of legal technique to save its members from prison or deportation, providing there is nothing pleaded in defense which contradicts or confuses the party principles.

"No lawyer shall be employed in the defense of any of our members who will not agree to be bound in his pleading by the plain, obvious meaning of the party declarations. In case of doubt as to the meaning, the interpretation of the Central Executive Committee, conveyed through an authorized representative, shall control.

"Every member shall refuse to answer questions or to supply information as defendant or witness concerning the party organization, its work, or membership."

The United Communist Party will not take part in the 1920 elections. It will not constitute "the third party." Endeavoring to function as an "underground" organization, it will undoubtedly be infested within a short time with the inevitable "undercover agents," and with *agents provocateurs*. No one is asked to join unless he is willing to face imprisonment if need be. The mere existence of the party is a sad commentary on political and economic life in America. H. W. L.

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Profiteers and the Profit System

John Kelmscott

FROM the socialist point of view, the present anti-profiteering campaign, while productive of much excellent propaganda, carries with it certain serious dangers. It threatens to become the great national sport, in which the President, the Attorney-General, the Secretary of the Treasury, and ninety per cent of the newspapers join full-throated in the hue and cry.

Why should the "kept press" denounce its own keepers? Why should Mr. Palmer in one and the same gesture deport a "red" and threaten "Our Best People" with dire penalties? Why should articulate capitalism, drawing its life-blood from profits, turn and rend the profiteer? The paradox while arresting is not insoluble. The average man is about to clutch the fact that all is not for the best in the best of all possible worlds. And so, to save the system, it is necessary to sacrifice the profiteer—at least the mental image of the profiteer. In other words, the sheep must be marked from the goats, and the division takes the altogether admirable form of running a picket fence called a "reasonable level of profits" between the two. The news is abroad that there are good profit-takers and bad profit-takers. And the acid test is the word "reasonable," which, to date, in respect to profits, is indefinable; and which probably never can be defined.

Who is the Profiteer?

When is an individual a profiteer? When he has made 100 per cent or 10 per cent? Per cent on what? *Sales* says one, *costs* says another, *investment* says a third. What is meant by *investment*? Cash contributions? Capital stock? Capital and surplus? Net worth and borrowed money? Total assets? Fixed assets? Each definition has its proponents. How do the neat percentages fare in this mêlée?

Suppose we take investment (which has more defenders than any other base) as the best criterion for figuring rates of profit; and

suppose we take net worth (capital and surplus) as the classical definition of investment. Suppose further that it is possible to secure universal agreement to this basis, and 10 per cent is set as the line of "reasonableness." Are we getting anywhere? Not an inch. A new company with capital stock paid in for cash, and no surplus, is held to a 10 per cent level on its cash investment; while an old company, which started on a shoe string, and has rolled up a great surplus through heavy profit-taking in the past, secures, on a 10 per cent net worth basis, perhaps a thousand per cent on its actual cash investment. Obviously there is no justice in this arrangement.

Suppose, then, that percentages be based on the amount of cash actually invested. Here we encounter even more formidable difficulties. For most of the corporations of this country, cash investment is a figure utterly impossible to find. It is confused on the books with property contributions, cash equivalents, genuine purchases of goodwill, revaluations of plant, and what not. And there is nothing a corporation loses more easily than its old books—they are as skittish as grandmother's spectacles. Furthermore, even if the actual cash contributions could be found as a basis for fixing a reasonable rate of profit, a very serious injustice would be done such long-established companies as had really denied their stockholders dividends in the past in order to reinvest the earnings in the business. New companies, and profligate companies would fare much better than carefully managed old companies.

Still undaunted, our apostle of reasonableness submits that a basis can be secured by an appraisal of all assets as they stand to-day. If this were attempted, however, he would need more accountants and appraisers to help him than all the Y. M. C. A. schools can turn out in the next one hundred years—to say nothing of the stupendous inequalities

that would arise between new and old companies on the basis of present duplication costs.

Despairing of investment, we turn to sales, costs, or unit of output as a basis for determining a reasonable rate. This is confusion worse confounded. Bad as investment is as a criterion, it is vastly better than either of these three proposals. Two cents per dollar of sales may be a relatively moderate profit for a concern which turns its business slowly, and a tremendous profit for one which turns its product rapidly. The highly diverse ratios of sales to capital employed, make all these bases worthless as comparable measures of a reasonable profit.

Finally there is the important matter of determining profit itself (as apart from the basis, or the rate). Shall interest and rent be included or excluded? Shall the fabulous advertising outlays of the past two or three years (to escape payment of income taxes) be admitted as legitimate costs in figuring profit? What are reasonable costs? What is a reasonable salary for a president of a soap works; for the treasurer of a steel company; for a hard-working ex-professor turned publicity man for a packing establishment? How much welfare work can be included in a reasonable cost? Shall one wash-basin per employee be deemed an excessive expense? Shall wash-basins be charged to expense at all, or to construction account? When is a new smoke-stack "repairs" and chargeable to cost, and when is it "construction" and kept out of the profit-and-loss account altogether? These may seem technical questions, but they are the merest child's play compared with the limitless accounting problems that now confront—yes and submerge—the Internal Revenue Department in its quaint attempt to secure true corporate profits.

"Reasonable Profit" Not Determinable

If, then, the doctors are all in disagreement in their diagnosis of what constitutes an acceptable basis on which to measure profits (and they are in disagreement because such basis can never be found) and if they cannot

find the amount of profit itself—short of employing upwards of an hundred thousand first-class accountants—it would seem that the matter of defining a "reasonable level of profit" is to all intents and purposes a tilting at windmills. It leads nowhere and means nothing.

If "reasonableness" cannot be defined, it follows that a "profiteer" cannot be defined, and all the hue and cry resolves itself into an attempt to run a non-existent fox to cover.

When all is said and done, however, it would be folly to deny that certain profits in the past four years—from any point of view, figured on any basis, and doctored as much as you please—are still so outrageous that the taker of them is manifestly guilty of what may be termed profiteering. And it is just such over-corpulent ones that capitalism is prepared to sacrifice. At the same time you may be sure that no solid, well-seasoned corporation is without its triple trench defense, that it intends to maintain until the last—a defense built upon the manifest "reasonableness" of its earnings, figured on an altogether convincing basis. (We have already established the gratifying variety of such bases, from which no discriminating corporation can well fail to pick a winner.)

Profit System vs. Non-Profit System

No. There remains only the profit system and the non-profit system. The former is a demonstrated evil, and the latter is a highly probable good. The attempt to mark off "reasonable" from "unreasonable" profits is a barren task for all who are determined to displace production for profit with production for use. It is doubtful if an evil thing can, with any value, be segregated into great evils, and evils not quite so great. It is an attempt to split the unsplitable. Furthermore, it is probable that, if profits could be held by some magic to "a reasonable level," the situation of the plain citizen would not be improved. The whole capitalist intelligence (and it is no mean intelligence in problems of this nature), would be bent to working out systems of investment-padding and

managerial sabotage that would operate to keep the relative distribution of income substantially where it is.

Wage Increase Fallacy

Specific figures are much cited of late, showing the amount the workers would have received in extra wages if profits had only been reasonable. It is announced that Company A has made 10 millions. The wage bill was 3 millions. Wages therefore might have been doubled, and the company have still retained a reasonable profit. This sort of reasoning is largely nonsense. The mathematics is sound, but the economics bad. Under the profit system no manufacturer can afford to double his workers' wages if there are other workers he can get for less. If competition obtains, and his competitor is not making as much profit as he is during this year, to double wages (as against the competitor who keeps to the old wage levels) might ruin him the next year. If monopoly obtains, while an industry might afford to double wages without facing future ruin on the score of costs, the rush of workers to that industry would soon undermine the original benevolent intention. It would be felt that an unfortunate policy of paternalism had been indulged in, and wages would go back to where they belong under the profit system—not far from the line of minimum subsistence.

It is also spread abroad that, if profits had been less, each family in America would have had more to spend—some authorities figuring appetizing totals running up as high as \$500 per family. This is more nonsense. It implies that if profits had been less, purchasing power would have been released for the benefit of the workers. This is not the way the system works. If profits had been little or nothing during the war, it is doubtful if the distribution of income would have been shifted one iota in favor of the great body of consumers.

Danger of Profiteer Hunting

There is, to be sure, a certain indignation-value in the pursuit of profiteers that may have sound educational results. But the

grave danger is that it tends to justify "reasonable" profits as against unreasonable ones. When some financial quack develops a spell wherewith he can pronounce: "Lo, all unreasonable profits are now turned reasonable!" the plain citizen will heave a sigh of relief, settle back, and look for no more trouble in that quarter.

This element of danger is well exemplified in the growing disposition to compare "war" profits with "pre-war" profits. This in effect establishes the proposition that all pre-war profits were reasonable. The intent of the comparison may be quite different, but certainly the impression that remains is that profiteers were spotless before the war. In fact, who ever heard of a "profiteer" before the war? The truth of the matter is, of course, that the plain citizen suffered as much from the profit system before the war as he does today. There are even grounds for believing that while the war was at its height, and profits were causing the takers thereof to become bowlegged carrying them to the bank, the position of the wayfaring man and his family—due to the attempts of the government to control industry in the interest of a correlated plan—was rather better than in the days of complete industrial anarchy before the war. In terms of food, shelter, clothing and comforts per capita, there have been many shortages more acute than that which obtained during the war. And when this chronic shortage of fundamental physical goods ceases to obtain, we will not need to worry about profit-takers good or bad, because in that great day there will be no more profit system.

Mr. Palmer believes in free speech—Oh, bless your heart, indeed he does!—the right sort of free speech, palmerized free speech. The anti-profiters believe in profits—bless you, yes—but they must be "reasonable" profits, good old-fashioned pre-war profits.

NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS

All changes of address must reach the office by the 15th of the month in order to ensure correct delivery of the magazine.

*Labor and Socialism in Italy*¹

Girolamo Valenti

DURING the last few months several Nitti governments have come and gone in Italy, due to the pressure of socialist forces. The present crisis is not merely political, caused by superficial differences between the parties represented in parliament. Nor is it provoked by the fiascos in the foreign policy of that unfortunate country. It is a crisis due to the present industrial structure, from which Italy can extricate herself only by changing from a capitalist to a socialist system of production.

Neither Francisco Nitti nor Salandra Giolitti nor even the *New York Times* can find a solution. The bourgeois system of government in Italy has, in fact, become bankrupt. Coal, iron, oil and other essential materials being absent from Italian soil, the present condition of international exchange has seriously crippled industries, thrown hundreds of thousands of workers out of employment, and raised the cost of living past toleration. The enormous public debt has discredited all Italian commercial enterprises abroad.

Italy, furthermore, is the only country among the Allies which has had to continue its bread rations. Food has been so scarce that repatriated immigrants have been compelled to return to America because their money could not buy the necessities of life.

General Strikes

On account of these and other conditions, Italy has been more affected by labor disturbances during the past year than any other country. We have witnessed the big general 48-hour strike of July 20 and 21, 1919, against Allied intervention in Russia—the only general strike in any country against

Allied policy that accomplished its purpose. Then came a strike in protest against the rough treatment of socialist deputies at the opening of legislature in December, 1919; the general railroad, telephone, telegraph, and postal workers' strike; the general strike called in Naples in sympathy with the steel workers; those in Venice, Milan, and Bologna protesting against the killing of alleged radicals; the strike of metal workers and machinists all over the country; and that in Turin and all the Piedmont region for the maintenance of shop councils, against the bitter opposition of the manufacturers. There were also strikes of an economic character by paper mill workers, marble and sulphur miners, agricultural workers, printers, medical workers, government clerks, and finally the strike of postal, telegraph, and telephone workers which played an important part in the downfall of one of the Nitti ministries in the spring of 1920.

Spirit of the Workers

The impressive thing to the ruling class, however, has not been the strikes themselves, but the revolutionary spirit accompanying the demonstrations. It has not been unusual to see tens of thousands of strikers marching with red flags and shouting "Long live the Soviets! Long live Lenin." (The name of Lenin appears to be more popular in northern industrial districts of Italy than it is in Russia itself.) Several times the dock workers in Genoa and Naples refused to load ammunition on vessels, on learning that it was destined to go to the anti-Soviet forces.

Another occasion for the expression of this spirit of revolution was the forced resignation of the socialist mayor of Milan. The provincial governor in that part of Italy asked the mayor to display the national flag on the hundredth anniversary of Victor Emanuel's birthday. This the Mayor refused to do, declaring that he preferred to give up his post. He resigned, whereupon a hundred

¹ This is the first of two articles on recent concrete developments in the Italian socialist and labor movement, and ably supplements the more general articles of Mr. Panunzio appearing in the May and July issues. The *Socialist Review* feels that the growing importance of the movement in Italy justifies more extended treatment at this time.

thousand workers left their work and paraded through the streets crying, "We want our socialist mayor." The protest was effective, and the mayor, Comrade Caldara, retained his position.

Still another instance. On April 18th last, a big contingent of carabinieri (national policemen) were ordered to the Piedmont area where a general strike was in progress. The railway workers in Florence heard of this plan, and, when the carabinieri entered the car, the workers refused to move it. The railroad officials first begged the men to work and then threatened them with discharge if they refused. The workers were told that the carabinieri were on their way to Bologna, not to the strike area. All persuasion was in vain. The train moved only when the track was cleared of the carabinieri. Similar action was taken by railroad workers in Livornio, Pisa and other cities.

Workmen's Councils

Another typical example of the drift of Italian workers toward the soviet idea is the action of the textile workers in the Lombardy region. These workers in the Manzoni Brothers' company, on being refused an increase by the firm, took possession of the factory, and operated it in good order for several days, choosing their own foremen and superintendents, and actually increasing production. In numerous instances of late, the workers have abandoned their employment not for the purpose of obtaining an increase in wages, but in order to take control of the shops. They no longer wish to work for others. This spirit is not the result of mere superficial revolutionary enthusiasm brought about by the terrible results of the great war, but of ceaseless educational work by socialists during the last fifty years.

Before the war socialists of Europe turned to their German comrades for lessons in organization. Today the Italian socialists may turn to the socialists of the world and say, "We possess the most perfect socialist machine, next to Russia's, that is now in existence."

Socialism and Labor

The Socialist Party of Italy is the strongest political organization in the country, dominant in morale and largest in membership. It can bring about the downfall of any ministry in power. On the economic field it controls the industrial destinies of the nation through the General Confederation of Labor.

It has been suggested in some quarters that the latter is an organization similar to the American Federation of Labor. Nothing is further from the truth. The Italian confederation was organized by socialists, possesses a socialist program, favors socialization of the means of production and distribution, and recognizes the class struggle in the attainment of its aims. The hostile reception given to Mr. Gompers during the war by the Confederation further indicates its difference from the American organization. The Italian confederation is two million strong, and openly supports the socialist ticket at elections. It has formed a pact with the Socialist Party whereby it agrees to call a general strike whenever the latter party deems it politically necessary.

A Correction

Miss E. Sylvia Pankhurst, whose article on "Sinn Fein and Labor" appeared in the April issue of *The Socialist Review*, calls attention to the fact that, on page 264 of that issue, comes the sentence: "The shooting had occurred on July 26th; on August 4th, the day Potsdam declared war, was held the inquest on the victims." Miss Pankhurst declares that, as the manuscript left her hands, the word *Britain* was used in place of *Potsdam*, adding, "as every one knows *Britain* declared war on Germany, not Germany on Britain, and I have no desire to falsify history, and deeply resent that anyone should have made it appear that I have done so."

The editor of *The Socialist Review* is unable, as is also the editor of the other magazine through whose courtesy the article was received, to trace the origin of the change, and regrets as deeply as does Miss Pankhurst this unfortunate error.

THE EDITOR.

Forces Making for Industrial Democracy— Should They Coöperate?

The I. S. S. Conference

Harry W. Laidler

HERE is the real news about the June Conference of the Intercollegiate Socialist Society: it demonstrated that liberals and radicals of every stripe can meet together amicably for at least six days, and can discuss fully their divergent views and programs for social progress without personal attack or acrimony.

To be sure the conferees—socialists, communists, members of the Labor Party, the Nonpartisan League, the Committee of Forty-eight, the A. F. of L., the I. W. W., the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers, the One Big Union, and the business world—came to no explicit agreement as to how their respective groups could best coöperate. Many of them merely stated their own programs and stressed neither their agreements nor their differences with other groups. A number of these movements

have not as yet found themselves. Concrete plans for coöperation must wait for future developments. But the spokesmen of these groups demonstrated that, individually, they were able to coöperate in making the first free forum of all the important liberal and radical groups a distinct success. This in itself was a coöperative achievement.

The location of the Conference was the Inn-in-the-Hills, Highland, New York, a spot of rare natural beauty. The time of the Conference was June 22 to 28, 1920. The Conference program proper was divided into two parts. The first five sessions were devoted to an analysis of the situation abroad, particularly in Russia, Germany, England, and Ireland. The second part of the Conference dealt with advanced movements in this country.

Russia

It was over the problem of the Russian Soviet Republic, that the first battle of wits took place. Three of the speakers—eye-witnesses of the workings of the Soviet government—gave vivid word pictures of conditions in Russia: Griffin Barry, a correspondent of the London *Daily Herald*, who had left Russia only five weeks before; Captain W. W. Pettit, attached to the Bullitt Mission, and Albert F. Coyle, a Y. M. C. A. worker. Then came the bitter attack on the Bolsheviks by Dr. S. Ingerman, formerly connected with the Russian Social Democratic Party, and the no less vigorous replies of Dr. Isaac Hourwich, of the Soviet Bureau, and Gregory Zilboorg, formerly Undersecretary of Labor in Kerensky's cabinet. Dr. James P. Warbasse, of the Coöperative League of Amer-

ica, also criticized the attitude of the Lenin regime to the Russian coöperative movement. Evans Clark, formerly of the Soviet Bureau, presided. Of unusual interest was Griffin Barry's graphic account of the Bolshevik "red specials":

Griffin Barry on Propaganda Trains

"My most interesting experience in Russia was my week's trip on one of the nine Bolshevik propaganda trains that are constantly being sent throughout that country. The train contained sleeping coaches of a quality equal to ours, left over from the old regime. The train of sixteen cars was run by electricity and possessed radio and telephonic connections. A daily newspaper was printed on the train. The library car was filled with literature of every variety—propaganda leaflets, Russian classics, etc. I found there Bryce's 'American Commonwealth,' and the works

of Woodrow Wilson, which, I was afterwards told, were used as text books in a course on 'Bourgeois Democracy.'

"Some sixty educators and officials of the Bolshevik government, representing all of the Commissars in Moscow, were aboard the train. They were all communists, silent, candid, efficient men, the cream of the ministries. Our first stop was at a small agricultural town, the farthest point penetrated by Denikin. The Bolshevik officers spoke in one of the town halls, and were listened to by some 600 of the population. The church service held the same hour attracted 16 inhabitants. The people everywhere showed a keen desire for books, though their attitude toward speeches was a somewhat passive one. Never before did they have such access to reading matter, and they were taking full advantage of their opportunity. Librarians from the towns along the way would board the train and spend the night, reading the books in the train library, and return to their homes the following morning after selecting those desired."

The head of the Russian church told Mr. Barry that he had not the faintest doubt that Lenin and Trotsky were idealists, despite their anti-church attitude, and that he approved of the separation of the church and state. He intimated that the separation had been a purifying element in the church and said that the attacks against the priesthood occurred mainly in remote districts, and against the instructions of the Moscow government. The speaker continued:

"The 800,000 communists in Russia impress me as a religious order rather than a political party. They spend little time discussing theory but they constantly emphasize the need for personal sacrifice."

Control by Experts

Barry found a bitter struggle going on over the question of the centralized control of government industries.

"The Bolsheviks favored iron control by the government in Moscow, and felt that their orders should be obeyed not only during the fight against foreign aggression, but during the entire struggle between capitalism and socialism in Russia. At a meeting of the trade union congress which I attended, the communists, led by Trotsky, argued for control by experts, rather than by the workers in the individual factories.

"The leaders gave an impression of complete candor in discussing the faults of the government, and the differences between communist ideals and

the present state of Russia. They appeared not to worry about any reaction against their rule. The reactionaries, they felt, had been beaten. The treaty of Versailles seemed to have relieved their minds. They were after the destruction of the old order, and they didn't attempt to justify their methods by any theory. They felt that the dictatorship of the proletariat was necessary. I asked one of them whether what they had in reality was not rather a dictatorship *in behalf* of the proletariat, and this he did not deny.

"The leaders recognize that the agricultural problem is far from solution. Lenin, in April, 1920, delivered a speech in which he declared that the present condition of peasant ownership was the worst kind of socialism, and that it would take a generation before this problem was solved."

Barry also described the dreariness of Petrograd in November, 1919, when he arrived; his visit to a communist milk farm, run "in perfect order"; his trip to the peace conference between the Russians and the Estonians, at which the Bolsheviks fought hard for public negotiations; and his visit to Moscow again at Easter time (1920), following the victory of the Soviet government in the Ukraine, and the opening up of great oil fields to the Russian government.

"The church bells were ringing all night. Tens of thousands were in the streets in holiday dress rejoicing. The war, they felt, was about to end. Food conditions in the cities were improving, and the people felt that they would never again pass through a winter as sad as the preceding one."

Coyle on Education

Albert F. Coyle, the young Y. M. C. A. worker, who returned from Russia last fall after a thrilling experience as prisoner of the Soviet government, reiterated the claim of many that Allied intervention created greater unity in Russia than did any other one event. According to the speaker, since the establishment of the Soviet government, two-thirds of the land has been resurveyed and distributed on a scientific basis; technical experts have been placed in charge of industry; the Taylor system of scientific management has been installed in many plants; non-essential industries have been eliminated, and the educational system has been greatly improved. The speaker quoted William T. Goode, the educator, as authority

for the statement that the Moscow manual training school is the best school of its kind on the continent. Undoubtedly the Soviet government has placed propagandists in charge of schools in many of the smaller cities, but this did not seem to be the case in Moscow.

Captain W. W. Pettit

Captain Pettit found on his visit in the spring of 1919 that the streets of Petrograd were clean, the mass of the people, while hungry, were not starving, and the theater and opera were flourishing. The players showed an unusual interest in their performances. Amateur plays were very numerous.

In an illuminating account of the Allied and American policy toward Russia, the speaker analyzed the differences between official pronouncements and actual policy. Months before America announced its intention to send American troops to protect Czecho-Slovaks against Austrian-German troops, he asserted, the State Department had been officially informed that the Austrian-German troops were unarmed.

Dr. Ingerman Declares Bolshevism a Failure

Sparks began to fly when Dr. S. Ingerman, long active in anti-Bolshevik agitation in this country, set forth his contention that Russia was "absolutely unprepared economically, politically, intellectually, and psychologically" for communism. Continuing, he said:

"The Bolsheviks abolished the liberties won by the revolution, ruined Russian industry, introduced forced labor, gave immense salaries to captains of industry, created a conservative peasant class, and, in the words of Kautsky, threw 'all their democratic principles overboard. It is true Bolshevism won a victory in Russia—but socialism sustained a defeat.'"

Gregory Zilboorg's Defense

As Dr. Ingerman concluded Gregory Zilboorg, fired by the criticism of the last speaker, leapt to his feet, and declared that this was no time for "full dress socialists to

expose their intellectual wounds before the world"; that the choice now lay between the dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia and the dictatorship of reaction, and that it was the duty of socialists to support the former. He continued:

"I do not agree with the philosophy or the tactics of Bolshevism. However, I must admit that, during the last few years, there has been a great upheaval in socialist thought. Old values have disappeared, and it is impossible to apply to socialism medieval standards. Who am I to judge what is the real socialism and what is not? If it were a question of supporting the dictatorship of capitalism or the government in Russia, I would go to red Russia."

Isaac A. Hourwich

In a less impassioned address than his predecessor—an address crowded with fact and argument—Dr. Hourwich continued the counter-attack on Dr. Ingerman's position begun by Dr. Zilboorg. He characterized Kautsky as a "medieval scholastic," and claimed that the Russian Social Democrats, "bossed" for years by "Saint Plechanoff," should be the last to object to a dictatorship. While not more than 10,000 were killed during the so-called "Red Terror," if the Mensheviks had their way, he asserted, a million people would have been sacrificed. When Korniloff reintroduced capital punishment, 8,000 soldiers were shot and their corpses lined along the highway. He felt that the Mensheviks, in protesting against Bolshevik outrages, did not come into court with clean hands.

Greatest Communist Experiment

Though claiming that he was not a Bolshevik in theory, Dr. Hourwich said that he regarded the economic system introduced by the Bolsheviks as the greatest communist experiment in history. The Jesuit state in Uruguay, South America, which existed for a century and a half, containing a few hundred thousands, chiefly Indians, was the only other example of communism on a large scale prior to the Russian adventure. The present experiment includes 150,000,000 people.

The speaker traced the inevitable develop-

ment toward Bolshevik control following the March revolution, the depreciation of currency, the increase in unemployment under the Kerensky regime, and the growing demand for communism.

"When the Bolsheviks gained power, the workers seized the factories which had been abandoned by the owners and managers. The operation of these factories was originally very chaotic. Finally, the government was forced to nationalize them in order to bring system out of chaos. The Bolshevik government, however, has not introduced communism throughout. It has nationalized 90 per cent of the factories, but agriculture has been left unaffected by the communistic system. Small farming is still the rule. The government has established a number of model farms with up-to-date agricultural machinery. These farms are operated on a large scale by the government in the expectation that they will serve as an encouragement to coöperative associations and foreigners, that the government is ready to encourage with machinery and credit.

"The government has not interfered with the small handicrafts in the country. It is trying to encourage the arts and crafts movement. It has attempted to nationalize distribution through the mechanism of the coöperative associations which have been nationalized. Still there is considerable individual trading left.

"What of the future? Can such a system of communism co-exist with private initiative in agriculture and handicrafts? There is no reason to doubt the possibility of further communistic development. The Russian industries are now organized as trusts except that they are owned and operated by the government. If the trusts have shown the ability to exist under private control, there is no reason to doubt the possibility of their continued existence under government control.

"This is no new experiment in Russia. The mining industry has in Russia been very largely a government owned and operated industry. Indeed, the foundation of factory industries was laid in Russia by the government as far back as the beginning of the 18th century.

"There is no reason to expect the overthrow of the Bolshevik government by the masses of the people, because the majority of the Russian people,

the peasants, have secured land through the Bolsheviks, and are therefore strongly in favor of that government; whereas all the counter-revolutionary governments have demonstrated to the peasantry that they are controlled by the landed nobility, which threatens the peasantry with a loss of their newly acquired land. The factory operatives are today in a far more favorable position than they were before the Bolshevik revolution, because the conditions of labor are determined by the labor unions. So there remains only a very small group of dissatisfied capitalists and professional people who lack the economic strength necessary to overthrow the government."

Warbasse on Coöperation

Dr. James P. Warbasse drew a distinction between the state and the voluntary coöperative movement. He deplored the action of the state, recently reported, in taking over the coöperative societies and making them a part of the government. The coöperatives, he maintained, made the Soviet government possible, and to destroy them was the irony of politics. If the present Soviet government falls, it will take down with it the coöperative movement.

Griffin Barry quoted a number of coöperators to the effect that the action of the government was a temporary necessity, and the gobbling up of coöperatives only superficial. One reason given for absorption was to avoid the growth of small capitalism in the communist movement. Dr. Hourwich cited a number of cases in which coöperators had aided reactionaries.

Evans Clark urged an American policy of non-interference in Russian affairs. He spoke of the aid given by this country to anti-Bolshevik forces, and of the millions of dollars of supplies, which, he alleged, had been sold by the War Department to the Polish army and paid for with promissory notes.

Germany

The tragedy of present conditions in Germany was grippingly described at the Wednesday evening session by three journalists

who had visited that country within the last year—Madeleine Doty, Robert Minor, and Henry W. Nevinson.

Nevinson on the Peace Treaty

Henry W. Nevinson, war correspondent, member of the staff of the London *Nation*, and the first correspondent to tell the Allied countries of the tragic condition of the Central Powers; maintained that the carrying out of the terms of the treaty would prove the ruin of that part of Europe. He said:

"The condition I found in Germany reminded one of the conditions after the Thirty Years War when life was not safe and nobody cared that it should be safe, because life itself was not considered worth while. We should protest with all of our power against the governments that we, the Allies, have set up and against their treatment of the Central Powers which is contrary to the dictates of humanity and civilization.

"The French government is quite determined on the extermination of Germany as a commercial power, imposing atrocious terms, which England to her eternal shame accepted. Fortunately, these terms have not as yet been accepted by America.

"Germany by the treaty must give up its numerous properties of coal, iron, river control, merchant ships—everything that could allow a commercial nation to exist. France, according to the papers, insists on the payment of a sum three times the amount fixed by Keynes as a possible demand, an amount very nearly as great as that raised by England in revenue before the war for all its expenses. These terms, if carried out, would mean extinction of the race."

Madeleine Doty

Miss Doty, chairman of the session, declared that, when she visited the hospitals of Berlin last summer, the milk supply was insufficient even for the new-born babies, who were compelled to drink imitation coffee instead. Through the kindness of Mr. Nevinson their bottles had nipples, but the proper contents were missing. Discussing the political situation, she stated that in her opinion the people of Germany were more likely to respond to a state socialist appeal than they were to a communist appeal.

Robert Minor on the Revolution

Robert Minor, the writer and artist, whose arrest several months ago on the charge of distributing Bolshevik propaganda among American troops received international attention, gave a clear account of the German

revolution. He was particularly vigorous in his denunciation of the German moderate Social Democratic Party. He said:

"The doctrine that the capitalist state would be overthrown by violence was not permitted to be taught in Germany. Marx fled in exile, and a milder type of socialists grew up in Germany, teaching that it was not necessary violently to destroy the capitalist state. This and similar modifications enabled them to keep within the law, and by them was built up the monster 'Social Democratic Party.' Its policy toward the capitalist state was one of reform within legality.

"In Russia, all socialist propaganda was legally forbidden. All that took place was underground and therefore did not evade the doctrine of the violent overthrow of the state.

"The Social Democratic Party of Germany was not outlawed during the war, but allowed to function. Such men as displeased the government were put into jail or ordered into the army, but the rest of the leaders were carefully if gingerly groomed and given facilities for holding their control of the socialist mass.

Capture of "The Soviet"

"With the breakdown of the German power and 'revolution' it became certain that all rebellious working-class minds would turn to 'soviets.' Therefore the bourgeoisie sent its 'friendly socialists' out to speak the magic word 'soviet' and to get themselves elected as soviet delegates.

"These 'stalking-horse' delegates quickly met in a so-called 'all-German Congress of Soviets' and formally abdicated their power in favor of a constituent assembly. This amounted to a guarantee of the continuation of the capitalist state.

"Liebknecht tried hard to explain the deception to the workers. But to his cry of 'All power to the Soviets!' the bourgeoisie through its socialist ministry replied, 'We bow to the will of the Soviet Congress, which decrees that there shall be a constituent assembly.' The issue was sufficiently confused to prevent mass action. No force on earth could accomplish this confusion for the benefit of the bourgeoisie, except a party machine that the labor mass had been trained to regard as its own—the 'Social Democratic Party.' In the wildest of the days of the civil war in Berlin frightened bourgeois gentlemen repeatedly told me that 'nothing can save us but the Majority Socialist Party; no one can speak to that mob for us but men known and trusted as socialists.'

"While regiments of rebels were being beaten by government troops, other regiments remained in barracks to listen to 'government socialists' and to debate the confused issue; by the time they made up their minds to fight, they were easily defeated, in turn.

"History records few instances of more brutal suppression than that of Noske, and no shrewder political act than that of the German capitalists in breeding and employing the Noske type to do it.

Revolution Not Dead

"Noske thought he shot the working-class revolution to death, but events prove that the revolu-

tion has been merely transferred from the street barricade to the factory and mine. The workers' power that broke the Von Kapp counter-revolution will yet break Noske. The latest German elections show the population deserting the middle ground of the 'moderates' and joining one or the other extreme camp. It indicates the line-up of classes for the last fight."

Great Britain and Ireland

Following the discussion of Russia and Germany, came the survey of the forces making for industrial democracy in Great Britain and Ireland. Arthur Gleason and Francis Neilson dealt primarily with England; while Henry Nevins on analyzed the struggle for Irish freedom.

Arthur Gleason: Revolution Now On

According to Arthur Gleason, author and president of the I. S. S., the British Social Revolution is now taking place as a result of the instincts of the worker, rather than through any conscious effort of the mass, or of a revolutionary minority. The workers are tired of producing for private profit. Even the minor demands "for more wages and shorter hours would shatter the British economy, because that was founded on defective machinery, bad management, and under-pay."

"The workers have few ideas on foreign policy. They have not made up their minds about Russia—except to leave it alone.

"As soon as they find out that supplies are being shipped for use against Soviet Russia, they will rise in strikes. It is not always easy, however, to find whether they are being transported to the Red Cross or to enemies of Russia. The Independent Labor Party has left the Second International, but will not join the Third if Lenin and others insist on laying down certain conditions, such as revolution by violence or dictatorship of the proletariat. It is likely, when the revolution is completed, that Parliament will continue to exist, while new industrial forms will be created."

Francis Neilson: The Land Question

Francis Neilson of *The Freeman* and former member of the British Parliament, urged

clear thinking on the land question as one of the first essentials of progress. Before any coöperation is possible, he asserted, it is necessary to understand the position of others. Mr. Neilson described the development of the British movement for taxation of land values. He characterized Lloyd George, who constantly shifted his relation to this movement, as an "unscrupulous cad." A fairer distribution of wealth, he felt, would be secured by making labor scarce and dear.

Nevinson on Irish Freedom

Mr. Nevins on, the chairman, friend of James Connolly, "wisest, straightest, and most generous hearted of men," and of other Irish leaders, this time brought the conference face to face with the Irish struggle for freedom. He advocated absolute self-determination as the only solution:

"I am quite convinced in my own mind that certain provisions are essential for a solution to the Irish problem. There must be absolute separation of the parliaments between England and Ireland. Ireland must have absolute financial control over her own revenue, and Dublin Castle must be cleared out. The British army must be withdrawn.

"My own firm belief is that there can be no solution until English statesmen have the good sense to go to Ireland and say: 'Take what you like, call yourselves a dominion, republic, whatever you like. We cannot do too much for you in the way of reparation for seven centuries of ruin, of hideous treatment.

"If the statesmen have the good sense to do that, Ireland would become for the first time in our history a really friendly country, and instead of having an enemy on our flank, we would have one of the best of friends. Nothing can be worse than the present situation, even from a military point of view."

Old and New Unionism

From Thursday evening to the end of the Conference, interest centered around the movements making for industrial democracy in this country. The first subject considered was Labor Unionism, Old and New.

Muste on Union Philosophy

A. J. Muste, secretary of the Amalgamated Textile Workers' Union, formerly a minister in Massachusetts, contended that both the old and new unions had for their objective, whether consciously or unconsciously, the overthrow of the existing order of society. The old unionists have certain advantages in the immediate struggle. It is easy and natural for them to compromise. They can center their attention more closely on the immediate job of organization. They are not subject to such widespread attacks as are those which publish their revolutionary aims. The speaker continued:

"On the other hand, the old unionists, devoid of any definite social philosophy, are constantly in a state of confusion in regard to immediate issues. At the last A. F. of L. convention, Gompers and Frey, in opposing the Plumb plan, took a position which, if adhered to, would lead the labor movement into syndicalism. The syndicalist philosophy must be met. It cannot be met by the old leadership, who are unable even to state the problem intelligently. The movement, without a goal, may be turned into a reactionary force.

"One of the problems before the labor movement is that of stating in American language the function of revolutionary unionism. Another question is whether radicals should work through existing organizations or create new industrial unions. In some instances the old organization should be scrapped. The Amalgamated Clothing Workers and the Textile Workers are justified in following this course. A union that has not organized ten per cent of the trade and that is making no effort at organization is hopeless. Radicals, however, should not needlessly sabotage or smash existing organizations."

The speaker declared that radical unions should guard against the setting up of rival organizations. On the other hand, they should not go into the A. F. of L. except on their own terms. The radical labor movement in this country is still exceedingly weak,

and its members should beware of going off half-cocked. Muste concluded:

"Every labor organization must function in the capitalist system. The question is not whether it should or should not compromise, the question is, to what extent should it compromise. Of course, the time may come when the best tactics are to fight and refuse to compromise."

Jack Beyer on the I. W. W.

The Industrial Workers of the World were represented at the Conference by Jack Beyer, secretary of the New York Defense Committee, a member of the labor movement for more than a generation, and a recent war prisoner in Leavenworth. Beyer claimed that the I. W. W. was the leading organization in the harvest fields, lumber camps, and mines of the Northwest, and that it was breaking new soil in the great industrial cities of the East and Middle West.

"The city of Philadelphia finds its water front completely tied up by 7,000 negro and white members of the One Big Union, and in New York City, and on through Ohio, Indiana, and Michigan, and Illinois the same industrial organization is gaining ground rapidly.

"Amazing as this seems to those who gain their information from the newspaper obituaries of the I. W. W. which have been appearing since 1917, the fact is no surprise to the people who understand the basic reasons for industrial unionism.

"Industrial unionism has been forced on the working class by the evolution of modern industry which, by eliminating competition, is concentrating industrial control into the hands of One Big Union of employers and by doing away with handicraft skill is undermining the old unionism.

"At the same time, as the I. W. W. grows in membership and power, it is growing more flexible and intelligent. The flexibility is coming into its mechanism through the shop local idea adopted from the British Shop Stewards Association, which is a formal part of the I. W. W., and through the new industrial district councils, which give greater autonomy and responsibility to localities without impairing the unity of the national industrial union.

"A wider range of fighting tactics is also coming into play. When the miners of Butte, Montana, voted to transfer their strike to the job they were following a declared policy of their union.

"This fighting, elastic, industrial organization is not merely in existence for the purpose of carrying

on the temporary class war. It was formed primarily for the purpose of reorganizing industry when the breakdown of the present absentee ownership occurs. The I. W. W. believes that this breakdown will come soon and that chaos and misery can be averted only by an intelligent organization which functions along the lines of industrial processes.

"For this reason a campaign of technical training is planned which will prepare the worker for industrial administration. Technical experts and workers on the job are collaborating for this purpose."

Beyer placed the present membership of the organization at about 260,000, including some 76,000 Marine Transport Workers, and thousands of metal and machine, construction, textile and agricultural workers, metal miners, etc. He asserted that the I. W. W. wishes not to smash the A. F. of L., but to absorb it. He criticized the latter on the ground that its affiliated organizations are craft unions, that they charge high initiation fees, and that they are not democratically managed.

In the ensuing discussion, Muste claimed that such organizations as the Amalgamated Textile Union were superior to the I. W. W., because, while industrial unions, they centered their attention on one industry, rather than trying to cover the whole industrial field. He predicted the development of one organization throughout the entire clothing industry.

Beyer denied that his organization was anti-political. He himself voted, and had been elected to a number of political offices. The I. W. W. was merely non-political.

Joseph D. Cannon for the A. F. of L

Following the discussion on the more recent forms of labor union organization, Joseph D. Cannon, of the metal miners, dealt with the progress in the American Federation of Labor toward industrial democracy. Cannon, who recently returned from the Montreal convention, was of the opinion that the convention's recent endorsement of the resolution in favor of public ownership and democratic management of the railroads spelled the doom of the nonpartisan program of Samuel Gompers. He said that the

high cost of living was forcing the labor movement to a more radical position.

"The labor movement of the United States is not consciously moving toward a change, complete or partial, in control or ownership; but the development of industry, with the accompanying widening chasm between wages and living costs, is driving labor to an advocacy of socialization, though that term would be vigorously resented by many of these advocates.

"The railroad workers, constructing, maintenance, and operating, have now evolved what is popularly known as the 'Plumb Plan.' This plan may not be complete socialization, but it is as far in that direction as any one industry or utility could be socialized under governments and systems still capitalist. Should further changes be necessary with the growing trend of socializing other industries the plan can readily be altered.

"The difference between the Plumb Plan and government ownership is that this plan provides for democratic control. That is the difference between government ownership and socialism.

"The Plumb Plan makes provision for a board of management representative of the workers and the public. The workers are to appoint their own representatives while the government will appoint the representatives of the public.

"If, at first, as is likely, the government appointees of the public should be unfair in management or in decisions, the responsibility cannot be shifted. It obviously follows that the government will have to be socialized as well as industry.

"This is the principle of railroad ownership and control for which the American Federation, against the wish of its officers, declared at its recent convention by a vote of 29,000 to 8,000.

"A result of this action at present not admitted by its opponents, is that it shatters the so-called non-partisan campaign of the American Federation of Labor and allied organizations. This is true, as neither of the old political parties can accept the Plumb Plan or any similar plan. Consequently the railroad workers will support neither of the old parties."

The Labor Party, according to the speaker, will be crucified in this campaign, but this in the end will be its salvation. Sooner or later the Socialist Party and the Labor Party should seek some way of avoiding opposition at the polls. "The most revolutionary thing of all is unity."

The question was further discussed by A. Epstein, William Raoul, Toscan Bennett, and Swinburne Hale. Anna Strunsky Walling presided.

Industrial Self-Government

Logically following the discussion of the old and new unionism was the session of Friday evening devoted to "Industrial Self-Government." This subject was viewed from the standpoint of a progressive business man; a former government officer, and members of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers and of the One Big Union.

Edgar B. Davis: The Business Point of View

Edgar B. Davis, formerly director of the United States Rubber Company, was of the opinion, in view of the progress under capitalism, that the present situation called for medicinal rather than surgical treatment. Industry was a three-legged stool, supported by capital, labor, and management. He continued:

"Labor should go into business on a large scale; should buy a very substantial interest in the various businesses in which it is engaged, thereby receiving its just proportion of the values it is to create. This collective interest should be sufficiently broad in its scope so that the man who sweeps out the factory or the woman who washes up the floor would be a part owner of the enterprise. Labor collectively, through its workers' association, would nominate representatives on the various boards of directors of the companies in the respective industries. Under this system, the capitalist would receive a minimum wage for his money, the laborers, both hand and brain workers, a minimum wage for their work; and the surplus would be divided fairly between them.

"My plan extends its benefits, including the right to vote, to all laborers collectively. It would not destroy capital; it would make the workers capitalists. It provides that workers should have representation not only in the management but upon the directorate of the enterprises in which they are engaged. It does not abridge the right of workers to strike, but I claim that after the plan has been put into successful operation, they would have no cause to strike.

"It is my belief that as soon as labor shows a willingness to bear the same responsibility that the capitalists bear, capital will meet labor in a spirit of coöperation."

Mary Gawthorpe of the Amalgamated

In marked contrast to the former address came the dynamic talk of Mary Gawthorpe, the educational director of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers in Rochester, who discussed the problem of workers' control as a representative of the aspirations of the progressive workers. Miss Gawthorpe declared that in the clothing industry in Rochester, formerly one of the most ruthless, disorganized industries, the practical beginnings of industrial self-government were being worked out from day to day.

"The Labor Adjustment Board is the machinery of this present day effort; but as it is only machinery it has no power in itself. The driving power back of it is the aims and ideals of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America.

"The practical economic facts are that through the machinery of the Labor Adjustment Board, strikes and stoppages have been virtually wiped out; vexing grievances like arbitrary discharge and unjust treatment are no longer possible as festering sores in the mind of the workers; decent treatment by foremen is in the main guaranteed in advance. Just and equitable conditions tending to more harmonious relations all round are the natural result.

"If the challenge is made, is it an advantage to help the employer, the answer is, in the words of Sidney Hillman, president of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, that the workers are just as interested as the employer in the efficient running of industry. At the recent Convention at Boston, this courageous recognition of 'ends' was approved by a large majority vote on the question of endorsing standards of production as the settled policy of the Union. In this way nothing can prevent the members of the Amalgamated from bringing to their hands and brains every experience that is necessary to full and complete responsibility and ownership of their industry.

"The machinery of the Labor Adjustment Board thus leads directly, through the progressive steps of recognition of the union, increased wages, shorter hours, voice and vote in the shop as well as in the union, practical education through shop and union committees, to a desire for more and more education and the larger life. Through this

will finally come a mutuality of understanding, and a coöperation of endeavor, which shall embrace the larger and still larger union of workers, where life and labor are seen as one."

Beyer on "Government Soviets"

The interesting experiment toward workers' control in the government arsenals at Rock Island and elsewhere was set forth by Captain Otto S. Beyer, Jr., whom some senators accuse of introducing "sovietism" into government departments. Numerous workers' committees were organized in these arsenals as the needs of the workers demanded, to improve labor standards, reduce waste, install better methods of accounting, devise new machinery, adjust the plant to different kinds of work, obtain contracts from other government departments, etc. Captain Beyer stated that the existence of these committees led to greatly increased production, and to an improvement of morale. Many workers were led to take courses of study to fit them to serve on these committees, and, within a few months, they knew more about the subjects discussed than did their commanding officers.

Legere on One Big Union

The final speaker of the evening was Ben Legere, the young organizer for the One

Big Union of Canada, who explained the significance of the "O. B. U." form of unionism in part as follows:

"The objective of the One Big Union movement is to organize labor as a class and to obtain power for the workers. We differ from the I. W. W. in that we believe that we do not have to organize an entire industry before calling a general strike. Just as soon as one center of population is organized a strike for revolutionary ends may be called in that community, as in the case of Winnipeg. We believe in local autonomy rather than in centralized control."

Legere described the general strike at Winnipeg which tied up that city for seven weeks, and which spread to 26 other cities. The general executive board of the O. B. U., he maintained, has no power over the rank and file. It serves merely as a coördinating body. The only real executive officers are those in the central councils in the various cities.

Following the set addresses Morris Berman, Jack Beyer, Mary Gawthorpe, Frederick Haller, and others took part in the discussion, asking Mr. Davis, among other questions, how it would be possible for the average worker, with little or no surplus, to become an owner in private industry.

"Radicals of the Right"

The political movements in America aiming at a change in the economic system occupied the Saturday and Sunday sessions. First came the so-called radicals of the right—the Labor Party, the Nonpartisan League and the Committee of Forty-Eight, represented, respectively, by Toscan Bennett, of Hartford, Connecticut; Walter W. Liggett, Deputy Commissioner of Immigration for North Dakota; and Swinburne Hale, the New York attorney.

Mrs. Blatch on Workers' Opportunity

Harriett Stanton Blatch, the famous suffrage leader, who has recently joined the Socialist Party, presided. Mrs. Blatch, in

her first public address after affiliating with the movement, stated that her chairmanship did not indicate that she was a radical of the right—she rather considered herself a radical of the left.

Mrs. Blatch traced the rise and fall of the labor parties from the early part of the nineteenth century, and found them invariably developing after economic crises. She quoted Samuel Gompers, during the Henry George campaign, as advocating the final undoing of the wage system, and hoped that some day he would catch up with his former radicalism. The workers in this election, Mrs. Blatch declared, have the opportunity of a life time to demonstrate their power.

Toscan Bennett for the Labor Party

Toscan Bennett gave the history of the American Labor Party, describing its appearance in local movements in Bridgeport, Conn. (September, 1918), and later in Chicago and New York. Within six months after the Bridgeport workers met, contended the speaker, 114 locals had sprung up all over the United States.

"In August, 1919, a conference was held in Chicago at the request of the Chicago Federation of Labor to decide whether or not an attempt was to be made to coordinate these various movements. It was voted to form a national organization and issue a call for a national convention. This convention was held in November, 1919. Twelve hundred delegates were present from 36 states, representing every craft affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, as well as many from various independent labor movements such as the Amalgamated Clothing Workers. At this convention a declaration of principles was drawn up, a constitution adopted, and a national executive committee elected. The committee was instructed to call a second national convention this summer for the purpose of nominating a national ticket.

"Various interesting factors are discernible in this Labor Party movement. It was purely a spontaneous growth among the rank and file. It was not brought into being by the efforts of labor officials or of intellectuals. Doubtless the force back of this spontaneous movement is to be found in the definite idealism which arose during the war, and more or less inarticulate feeling that shorter hours and higher wages no longer met the needs of the workers. In other words, it was an unshaped yearning for a change in status, a full and complete citizenship and a determination to make real the smooth high sounding phrases of equality and freedom upon which the workers had been fed by the government spell-binders during the war.

"Labor realizes that political democracy is an impossibility and its professions mockery until we have industrial democracy. This they know can never be achieved through the means of the two old parties. The Labor Party has attempted to give the worker a political organization, along side of his industrial organization.

"The lack of leadership has both its advantages and disadvantages. The workers in the Labor Party movement wish it always to continue a rank and file movement, directed from the bottom up rather than from the top down. In other words, we wish to evolve a technique of genuine mass leadership and control."

Swinburne Hale: the Forty-Eighters

Swinburne Hale, the next speaker, attorney for many of the recent deportees, introduced himself as the extreme feather on the left wing of the Committee of Forty-Eight, likely to be blown away at almost any moment. The Committee movement started in New York City in January, 1919, among discontented radicals. Its founders formulated no platform but proposed that liberals come together as in a New England town meeting and talk. Mr. Hale described the conference in St. Louis and the attacks on the Committee by members of the American Legion and of the St. Louis *Globe-Democrat*—so-called because "it is the most undemocratic journal on the globe." He continued:

"In St. Louis the Committee formulated a program which advocated public ownership of public utilities and natural resources, abolition of speculation in land, and the restoration of the right of free speech and press. Those joining the Committee were not asked to agree with this tentative platform, but merely to agree that it formed a good basis for discussion. The mistake should not be made that the Committee is a political party. It makes no such claim. It hopes in its July meeting in Chicago to help in the formation of a political party. At that time a binding platform will be formulated and an attempt made to unite various liberal and radical groups into a third party."

In conclusion, Mr. Hale declared that the country is now run by a soviet of lawyers and bankers. "The function of a political government is to protect privilege. We want a political government that will protect the privilege of the workers."

The Nonpartisan League

The final speaker in the morning's program was the representative of the Nonpartisan League, Walter W. Liggett, deputy commissioner of immigration, not *emigration*, he was careful to explain. Mr. Liggett described at length the increasing poverty of the North Dakota farmers prior to the formation of the League—despite their large wheat crops—and the control of the legislature by the big business interests of other states. Continuing, he said:

"The people of North Dakota recorded themselves five times in favor of state elevators between 1908 and 1915. Five times their demands were ignored. They finally sent a delegation to the governor to protest against this and other conditions. The governor told them to go home and slop their hogs. They went home and have been slopping their political hogs ever since. They met that night in a hall in the capital and determined to go into politics. They adopted a platform favoring state terminal elevators and flour mills, rural credit, hail insurance, exemption of farm improvements from taxation, and a system of grading grain. Farmers for years had been cheated out of millions of dollars by buyers of grain who decided to what grade the grain belonged.

Growth of League

"The upshot of this conference was the organization of the Nonpartisan League. Townley, a former organizer of the Socialist Party, was the first in the field. He started out one March day to obtain members. He saw six farmers and got the six to sign up and pay their money for the League. The second day he saw and obtained the signatures of eight. Out of the first 79 he interviewed in the first few days, 78 signed up. Some one staked him to a Ford. Other organizers were employed. Within six months the League contained 20,000 paid members. Politicians knew little about it. When Townley went to the postmaster of Fargo to make arrangements for mailing privileges, the postmaster asked what his circulation was. He replied: 'Twenty thousand.'

"But this is the first time that I have heard about this movement,' replied the postmaster.

"We have not been organizing postmasters. We have been organizing farmers,' answered Townley.

"The state convention gave to politicians the first indication of the strength of the movement. The League nominated a ticket and told the nominated men that they were drafted and that it was their patriotic duty to serve. The neighbors found their gubernatorial candidate, Frazier, working on his farm, unaware of his nomination, when they went to congratulate him. 'But I haven't had any political experience,' said Frazier. 'That's why we nominated you,' was the rejoinder.

"In 1916 the League went into the Republican primaries and won out. In the fall the entire Nonpartisan League ticket was elected by a vote of some 86,000 against 20,000. The League, despite every sort of misrepresentation, won three-fourths of the seats in the assembly and nearly every senator up for election, although the hold-over senators still controlled the senate.

Court Victory

"In the fall of 1918, we elected four members of the Supreme Court and the majority in the assembly and senate. In the following spring, we enacted into law every platform pledge. We passed the most liberal labor program ever passed in any state in the union. In the summer of 1919, the entire program was upheld by the people. Then began a suit in the state court against our measures of state ownership. We were upheld in the highest court in North Dakota by a vote of four to one. Action was next taken to the federal courts, but Judge Charles F. Amidon, in a remarkable decision, sustained our program. The decision was then appealed to the United States Supreme Court, and, on June 1, of this year, that court handed down a decision sustaining the program of the League in every particular. This unanimous decision, the most important since the Dred Scott case, makes it possible for a state to institute an extensive program of state ownership in competition with private business.

Success of State Industries

"The state industries in North Dakota have been running a little over a year. A state bank has been established, with which most of the private banks, though opposed to state ownership, are now affiliated. All public moneys are now deposited in this state bank, which has monthly clearings of \$45,000,000. The interest charged is 6%, as compared with an average of 8.7% asked by state banks. The bank thus far has made a clear profit of \$145,000, besides repaying to the state the amount appropriated for its establishment.

"The state milling business has secured for the farmers eight cents more per bushel than that given by private concerns, while the consumer has saved from fifty cents to a dollar a bushel. The farmers of the state have directly saved by this state venture something like \$100,000. The mill just completed will mean a \$1,000,000 saving to the farmers of the state, although it will be able to handle only about one twenty-fifth of the entire wheat crop.

"The third big industrial enterprise—state hail insurance—covers at present twelve million acres of land at a cost to the insured of 28 cents an acre, compared with 77 cents, the charge of private insurance companies. This means a saving of some \$5,400,000. We are building up a monopoly, not by law, but by superior efficiency. We have piled up a surplus of \$277,000, in connection with this industry, and have insured all state buildings and property.

"The state banks are lending money for the building of houses, and we are getting applications

for settlements from all over the country. We have thus far placed 300 settlers on the land, and are working out a system of cooperation with the Department of Immigration whereby we may meet the incoming immigrants and place many of them on the land, under long-term easy loans.

"The Nonpartisan League is now functioning in 13 states, with a membership of approximately 250,000. In Minnesota, recently, our candidate, while defeated, polled more than one-third of the entire vote. The League is accused of being a class movement. Our justification is that it has superseded another class movement of lawyers, professional politicians, and business men, ruled by foreign business interests—the packing trust, the steel industry, the milling and insurance combines."

Mr. Liggett concluded by declaring that freedom of speech and press existed in North Dakota and that that state had not been caught in the grip of the prevailing hysteria. It had not appointed Lusk Committees, but had set to work to cure economic evils.

Speakers Challenged

In the ensuing discussion, Liggett was confronted with Arthur Le Sueur's criticism of the League—that state industries in North Dakota were directed by a political administration—a commission consisting of the governor, the attorney general, and the commissioner of agriculture—rather than by an industrial administration, and that such management failed to provide for continuity and for the fixing of responsibility. Liggett replied that Le Sueur had submitted his plan to the League officers and that, after a long discussion, every officer except Le Sueur had rejected it. The appointment of the numerous commissions suggested by Le Sueur, he

contended, would be fatal to the League's program.

During the discussion also Louis Boudin asked Toscan Bennett to explain the reason for the formation of a Labor Party when the Socialist Party was already in existence. Bennett replied that the Socialist Party in the past had been unable to win the rank and file of the trade unions to its standard, partly because of quarrels engendered during the days of the S. L. P., partly because the party spoke to the masses in terms they did not understand, and partly because some of the socialists had been suspected of advocating violence. If, years ago, the speaker held, socialists had realized as keenly as they seemed to realize at the last convention, the necessity of using American terminology in appealing to the workers, there would probably be no Labor Party in the field to-day. Mr. Bennett hoped that, within a short time, the rank and file of the two movements would come together in some sort of an agreement, as in Great Britain, although each movement should preserve its identity. The Labor Party, he said, had expressly left the way open for a working alliance between these two groups.

Professor Nathaniel Schmidt, of Cornell, asked the three speakers what international program their respective groups offered. The representatives of the Committee of Forty-Eight and of the Nonpartisan League stated that thus far their movements had failed to formulate an international policy. Mr. Bennett read the Labor Party's attitude toward a number of international questions.

Radicals of the Left

Hughan on Socialist Divisions

Communist and socialist were the next groups to tell of their respective aims and ideals at the Saturday evening session of the Conference. A clear analysis of the similarities and differences between these groups was presented by the chairman of the session, Dr. Jessie W. Hughan. Dr. Hughan contended that the "socialist movement is not

an iron-bound organization where all men must say Amen to the creed or be tried for heresy; neither is it a floating group of politicians who choose their platforms according to the year's fashions and wait for a tip from the boss before they decide between progress and reaction. It is a movement animated by a fixed principle, that of political and industrial democracy."

Gertrude Nafe on the United Communists

Miss Nafe represented the United Communist Party, which has recently combined the Communist Labor Party and the various elements of the Communist Party outside of the Russian Federations. She attempted to refute the four counts against them: (1) that they were extremists; (2) that, even granting their position was right, they talked too much and too noisily; (3) that they advocated force; (4) that they refused to accept the practical immediate things they could get. In rebuttal she said:

"(1) We answer that it was once extreme to object to chattel slavery. Any position is extreme when first taken. If we retreat, the next position becomes extreme and is subject to all the criticism given the extremists. You cannot cut a string so short that it has not two ends.

"(2) We are told that half a loaf is better than no bread. But we are much more likely to get half a loaf by demanding our just share, the whole. Let the other side do the cutting down. Why should we?

"(3) We do not threaten violence and never have. We prophesy that the change will not be made without the use of force and we resolve not to be deterred by that fact. Violence covers the earth at present and is the root of all governments. The only possible foundation of peace is justice.

"As to the little taunt flung at us often, that we are young, 'If it were so, it were a grievous fault.' But seriously, to quote Gilbert Cannan, 'There are times when young men must attempt to say what old men cannot think.'

"(4) The last argument is that we do not seize the practical good that we can do. Sometimes those 'practical' things really make a bad matter worse. Two radicals, centuries ago, exasperated by the right wing of their generation, cursed the compromisers, and cried out against those who call, 'Peace, peace' when there is no peace.

"It is a doubtful favor that one does a slave by making his slavery a little more tolerable. We prefer to be of those who cry, 'Rise, quit ye like men.'"

Trachtenberg for the Left Socialists

Following Miss Nafe's address, Alexander Trachtenberg, editor of "The American Labor Year Book," declared that the left socialists represented the majority opinion

in the party. To prove this he read excerpts from a number of documents in which the party had taken a left wing position. Continuing he said:

"The left wing in the party realizes that capitalism is already breaking up, that the social revolution has already begun, and that it is the duty of the advance guard to prepare the mass of the workers for the great change. They believe that socialists shall subscribe to political action on account of its propaganda value. The main aim of socialists should be the conquest of all political power. Coalitions between any except socialist groups should be opposed, as all other groups stand for the established order. The policy of Kerensky and of Ebert does not work.

"When the revolution comes, there must be a dictatorship of the proletariat during the transitional period, and the workers alone must be in control. Socialists should enter the industrial struggle and ally themselves with the workers as the advance-guard of the labor movement. They should urge the workers to try to secure as much control as possible in industry and to train themselves in problems of management.

"The American Socialist Party should affiliate with the Third International without reservation. We must also differentiate ourselves from all other elements who belong to liberal groups. On the other hand, we believe that the communist groups are not realists engaged as they are in taking over wholesale the tactics adopted by socialists of other lands."

Algernon Lee: A Movement Not a Theory

Resenting the implication that he was a socialist of the right, and calling himself a socialist, nothing more, nothing less, Algernon Lee, director of the Rand School of Social Science, said that he found himself in substantial agreement with the views of the previous speaker. Mr. Lee continued:

"It should be borne in mind that socialism is primarily a movement, not a scheme of social development. It is a movement of the masses, who belong in the main to the wage-earning class, and it represents theories that that class has developed. The Socialist Party is an instrument that has served the masses for twenty years as the political representative of the wage-workers. Several times the socialist movement in America has been divided. In 1896, it looked as if it was about to disappear. The movement survived, however, and grew. In 1899, it passed through another violent controversy. In 1905, when Hearst organized the

Independence League, the party was again shaken. An internal crisis occurred in the period from 1910 to 1912. In 1917 prediction was rife that the party would be crushed. It was true that during that period its membership fell off, but it emerged from the war stronger than ever.

"We are not greatly disturbed over present dissensions. The Socialist Party is able to take a realistic view, and it will not be drawn into a factitious imitation of foreign parties, nor will it throw over its organization.

"Many think that the party would succeed better under another name. However, any movement that is radical will find itself subjected to violent epithets. Objection is made to socialist phraseology. But as soon as people become interested in the thing itself, they acquire the phraseology automatically.

"It is not true that the Socialist Party has been interested primarily in parliamentary action. Its

activity has been quite as much on the industrial as on the political field. It has given freely of its services and its money during strikes, and has come into touch with the labor movement to the limit of its ability. However, intellectuals on the outside who have no place in the labor movement are likely to create confusion in the ranks of labor."

Discussion

All of Sunday morning was given over to the pros and cons of the Socialist and Communist Parties, to the place of violence in the labor movement, to the efficacy in this country of any underground movement, to the question of the proletarian dictatorship, and to the possible means for coöperation between the many forces that were marching toward the goal of industrial democracy.

A Concert and a Discussion of Imperialism

In the first half of the Sunday afternoon session, Agnes Armington Laidler sang groups of French and Russian songs and negro spirituals. Preceding the last group, James Weldon Johnson recited one of his poems and told something of the development of negro music. Carroll Hollister acted as accompanist and rendered a number of piano selections.

James Weldon Johnson on Haiti

James Weldon Johnson, who in addition to being a poet is field secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, opened the second half of the session.

Reviewing his recent trip to Haiti, Mr. Johnson first described the culture of the leisure class at Port au Prince, the hundreds of beautiful villas, the cleanliness of the city and the thrift of its people, and the former glory of the Haitian court. Referring to American intervention, he said:

"In July, 1915, the American government intervened in Haiti. Months before it stated that it would recognize President Theodore providing that Haiti would sign a certain convention similar to that signed by Porto Rico. In January the Ford Mission visited Haiti. Its members had no credentials, and the Haitians refused to negotiate

with them. Another mission was sent, which stated that signature of the convention must precede American recognition. A *coup d'état* finally gave Americans an excuse for going in with some 3,000 marines, and taking control. There are, indeed, at present a president, a cabinet, and civil officers, but Haiti is now under martial law. There is in reality no civil law.

"I heard many a tale of atrocities. One marine told of meeting a number of these Haitians making merry at a cock fight, and of turning the machine guns on them. Others told of unwarranted assaults on men and women. The American government has created in the people bitter and deep resentment."

In conclusion Mr. Johnson explained the connection between intervention and the desire for commercial exploitation—the desire to control the coffee, sugar, chocolate, and other plantations of that country.

Boudin on Imperialist Ideology

That America's imperialistic career is only in its beginning stages was the contention of Louis Boudin, the noted Marxian scholar. Mr. Boudin drew attention to Admiral Fiske's "The Art of Fighting," as typifying the "Prussian imperial ideology," the glorification of physical force. The speaker also traced the development of the moral code in favor of imperialistic practices, including the

doctrine of "the white man's burden," the theory that force is the determining factor in human progress, that war is the great engine of progress and civilization.

Rao on India

The British imperialistic policy in India and the movement for Indian freedom were briefly outlined by D. S. Vijaya Rao, the general manager of *Young India*. Mr. Rao declared that the two chief forces working for Indian freedom were the British Labor Party and the Indian Nationalist Party.

Charles Zueblin, during the discussion, declared that imperialism was merely a symptom of our civilization, and was a part of

the general program for the exploitation of weaker people. Ireland, India, and the islands of the Caribbean Sea could be freed only as a result of the organization of the world. Dr. Zueblin urged more catholicity, less orthodoxy in the radical movement, and the seeking of a basis for unity so that the forces of progress might effectively oppose the forces of reaction.

Professor Nathaniel Schmidt, of Cornell, the chairman of the meeting, concluded the session by pleading for a league of peoples, and for more coöperation in the radical movement—particularly during political campaigns. He declared that the Socialist Party was the only movement at present which had a satisfactory international policy.

Freedom of Opinion

The final session of the convention was devoted to the question of the channels through which democracy could express itself.

Roger Baldwin: American Freedom Today

Roger Baldwin, of the American Civil Liberties Union, who had just returned from a trip to the Pacific Coast, declared that there was as yet little evidence in the country of free speech and press. The campaign against free expression is largely motivated by a desire to weaken organized labor. He said in part:

"The lid is on. There is no doubt about that. Everywhere in the United States the hysterical anti-red campaign has clamped the lid on free speech and free assemblage. In substance it is an attack on the right of labor to organize, strike, and picket. Organized business is engaged in a colossal anti-labor campaign. That campaign is waged through two forces, law and direct action. The program of law for every state includes the prohibition of strikes through industrial courts, strike-breaking state constabularies, criminal syndicalism and sedition acts, and anti-picketing laws or injunctions.

"The only places in the United States today with free press and free assemblage are where the workers or the farmers are strongly enough organized to take and hold these rights. For instance, North Dakota and Wisconsin alone among western states have none of the criminal syndicalism or

sedition laws under which free opinion is gagged. Even in Montana no convictions can be obtained under the criminal syndicalism law, because of the clean-cut issue between farmers and workers on the one side and the copper companies on the other. The fiction that constitutional American rights can be maintained through law has been pretty well exploded. Everywhere the realization is growing that legal rights are hollow shams without the political and economic power to enforce them. The road to industrial freedom is the way to all freedom."

Humphries: Leavenworth Prison

Earl Humphries, the young conscientious objector, recently released from Leavenworth, gave a number of incidents, some humorous, some tragic, about the treatment of war prisoners.

"Underlying the policy of our militarists I believe there was a definite, premeditated plan of action including cheap brutality and petty persecution, which was at complete variance with their expressed liberality. In support of this theory, there is ample evidence: the long record of atrocities in camp and prison which covers a period of over a year and a half. Most of these atrocities were perpetrated by local officers, guards, and sentries, but they could easily have been prevented by the higher officials had there been any intention on their part to live up to their liberal promises.

"Among the many failures that can be attributed to this policy was the effect it had on the absolutists and near-absolutists who finally landed in

prison. It utterly failed with this group. The history of the individual objector in prison was generally a progress toward absolutism; the politicals slowly but surely progressed from right to left; there was, so to speak, a definite evolution of the 'parlor socialist' into a 'left winger' and the more or less sentimentalist into a class-conscious rebel."

Wallis W. Lefeaux, the assistant attorney for the Winnipeg strike leaders, told a dramatic story of the attempt of the authorities in Vancouver to deny the socialists the use of the city theaters and of the comrades' success in preserving the right of free assemblage.

Swinburne Hale, the chairman of the meeting, gave a rapid sketch of the deportation proceedings and the final discrediting of the Attorney General. Referring to the prosecution of the Finnish paper, the *Class Struggle*, Mr. Hale said:

"This paper printed an article claiming that the mob action of the capitalists must be met by the mob action of the proletariat. The paper had a circulation of 200. When its editors were brought into court, this extreme article was printed in full in nearly all of the metropolitan dailies, and before it reached the Pacific coast it must have obtained a circulation of fifty million."

Concluding Moments

Before the conclusion of the Conference Jessica Smith emphasized the value to the social movement of just such free forums as had been held during the preceding week and urged all who believed in the work of the Intercollegiate Socialist Society to coöperate with it in every possible way.

A vote of thanks was extended to the speakers of the Conference for their time and thought freely given, to Mrs. Laidler and Mr. Hollister for their musical contributions, and to the Executive Secretary and Secretary of the Society for their respective parts in the week's success. The meeting adjourned for a marshmallow roast and a "sing" on the mountain-side near "the ruins," and listened until past midnight to the Russian folk songs led by Gregory Zilboorg, to Jack Beyer's absorbing tales of "wobblies," and to the delightful negro yarns and poems of James Weldon Johnson.

Monday's tramp through the woods closed a week memorable to the two hundred and more who were present for part or all of this most successful of I. S. S. gatherings.

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